

Letter from Eliza Symonds Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, February 21, 1880

Tutelo Heights, Brantford, Ont. Feb. 21, 1880 My dear Alex,

We have been expecting and hoping to hear from you for the last week telling the particulars of the sudden appearance of little Miss Valentine. We hope her advent was not premature and that dear Mabel is making a good recovery. I had been in a fidget about her in consequence of the excitement and hurry of her sisters wedding. During the past ten days or so — Papa has had three notices from the dead letter office in Washington that dispatches were lying there for want of sufficient stamps — or postage.

The first proved to be Mrs. Grossman's wedding card. The second and third dispatch we have not get received. Wedding cards addressed to Aunt Ellen were in the dead letter office also and were only received three days ago. You had better see to this — and find with whom the fault rests, because matters of real consequence might be lost. I think it very likely that your wedding card that Uncle Edward never got, may have been lost in a similar way — for Melbourne would have been to far away for a notice to have been sent by the Post Master. Charley wrote a few lines to his Father and mentioned the difficulty he had in procuring lodgings. I don't know exactly how you employ him but if as Secretary, why not lodge him in your separate house — which Mabel told me of — that Mary Horne takes charge of? He might I suppose easily find a place to take his meals in. I hope dear Mabel suffered less on this occasion than the last — though she would be in more pain afterwards — but that is always the case. I suppose no news has yet been had of the travellers?

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We are in great confusion just now having the house done up — which could not be accomplished last summer. We are having the walls papered instead of white-washed, as the latter comes off so much.

I hope you safely — or rather Mabel — received the dispatch enclosing a cheque for my debt to you — Since I began this letter Papa and I have come into town and I am finishing this at Mr. Henderson's office whilst your father has gone to Mr. Wilkes. I am about to join him there and it is likely he may add a few lines. We are all well at home. Tell Mable with my love, that, I am likely to die more comfortably if she gives us only granddaughters — from the pleasant reflection that wars will have no claim upon them.

I am longing to know what Elsie says to the baby, and if the latter at all resembles what she was. Perhaps one of the letters detained at the dead letter office may be from you. Have you a letter weigher? You will be very glad to know how much comfort I derive from my new tube.

With fond love to all and kisses to the darlings — your ever affectionate Mother,

E. G. Bell.